



# Volunteer Champion Awards Recipients 2015

## Honorary Life Memberships

### Joyce Walter - Nominated by the Moose Jaw Exhibition

Joyce Walter has been nominated by the Moose Jaw Exhibition for Honorary Life membership in SAASE. Joyce has been very involved with the Moose Jaw Exhibition for 35 years in various capacities. She was elected as the first woman to the Moose Jaw Exhibition board of directors in 1980. She was elected president in 1983/84 and then served as president again in 2005/2006. As part of the board Joyce was very involved in the Exhibition's biggest events for many years. - she served as the Chairman of the Hometown Fair from 1983 - 88, and was instrumental in implementing the pay one price system, which was later adopted at fairs across Canada. In addition to Fair Chairman she also served as the entertainment buyer for many years. Joyce helped out with writing the Exhibition's first set of bylaws. She has been named Exhibition Volunteer of the Year, as well as Director of the Year. She continues as a director of the Moose Jaw Exhibition Company and a member of the Burrowing Owl committee.

Joyce was also very involved in the production of the Exhibition's Hometown Rodeo and Golden Mile Harvest Rodeo sitting on the rodeo committees and also acting as rodeo chairman. Along with long-time director Ray Sheward, successfully lobbied the provincial government to allow Sunday horse racing in the province. Moose Jaw was the first location to take advantage of Sunday racing. Sunday casino operations were also part of the package. Joyce has represented the Moose Jaw Exhibition Company at numerous fair-related conventions including Western Canada Fairs, Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions, Rocky Mountain Fairs Association and Saskatchewan Association of Agricultural Societies and Exhibitions.

As well as volunteering for the Moose Jaw Exhibition, Joyce volunteered in the fair industry for many years. She was president of Western Canada Fairs in 1992 and served as secretary-manager of Western Canada Fairs from 1993 to 2011 when the group officially disbanded. She served on the advisory committee that initially established SAASE, and was named Volunteer of the Year by Western Canada Fairs, as well as the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions.

Joyce has been active in the community, and has served on numerous committees including Canada Day, YM-YWCA, the city's diamond jubilee, centennial and millennium committees, the provincial centennial committee, Saskatchewan Air Show board of directors, Moose Jaw Rotary Club, and currently is a member of the 15 Wing Fellowship, Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 59 and the Sukanen Ship Pioneer Village and Museum. She has assisted with protocol arrangements for three Royal Family visits to Moose Jaw.

Joyce has worked in the Moose Jaw newspaper industry since 1968, being the first female managing editor of a daily newspaper in Western Canada and currently is a free-lance writer/columnist for Moose Jaw Express. She was named Citizen of the Year in 1989, Moose Jaw Ambassador in 1992 and received the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal in 2005. Joyce has been married to Ron Walter for 45 years. SAASE is very proud to name Joyce Walter an Honorary Life Member.

### Ernie Wilson - Nominated by the Moose Jaw Exhibition

Ernie Wilson has been nominated by the Moose Jaw Exhibition as an Honorary Life Member in SAASE. Ernie has been involved with the Moose Jaw Exhibition over the past 12 years as both a volunteer and member of the board of Directors. He has sat on various committees - became 3rd Vice President and worked his way up the ranks to President where he remained for three years. This was then followed by two years as Past President. Ernie has also been Chairman of numerous committees. He has been Chairman of concessions and displays for the Hometown Fair. He was also Chairman of the Rodeo Committee, and was part of the committee that oversaw the construction of the Bill Gomersal Arena. With other community groups, Ernie has also sat on the Focus on Trade committee, as well as helping out on many of the other Exhibition committees. He also volunteers for events where he is needed - anything from bartending - to set up, right through to clean up. You can see Ernie on the grounds from well before the Fair opens to after it closes. Ernie has been married to Judy for 34 years,

and always ends up spending his anniversary volunteering at the fair. As Ernie always says, “it looks like we will be doing it again this year.”

In addition to all his volunteer work with the Moose Jaw Exhibition, Ernie has been very involved with the community. He started volunteering at a very young age, helping put up Political signs for the local candidate at Coderre. When his children were young, he helped out at his church by being cookie Dad for the Sunday School, later serving on the church council, and becoming President. When his son joined Boy Scouts, he helped out the leaders and volunteered at meetings and at camp outs. For three years he was a volunteer on the Board and helped with fundraisers for the Kids Help Phone.

Ernie has been working at the Moose Jaw Times Herald for past 12 years and is now working with the times Herald Booster. Ernie has one son, Jonathan, who is married to Talia and they live in Medicine Hat, AB. He has one daughter, Jessica, who is engaged to Carson Daly and they reside in Moose Jaw. He has three grandsons, Brandon, Ryder and Hunter, who he loves spending time with. Even though he is now an Honorary Life Member ernie said, “I have enjoyed my years with the Moose Jaw Exhibition Company, and look forward to volunteering in the years to come.”

## Achievements of the Year

### Swift Current Frontier Days/Homecoming

It was an event-full 2014 – not only did the Swift Current Agricultural and Exhibition Organization carry on with the annual events of the Spring Trade Show, Discover the Farm, and Ranchman’s Ridin’ & Recitin’ and Young Ranchman’s All Breed Livestock Show , but a highlight was Frontier Days / Homecoming with the theme of “Saddle Up for the Ride of a Century”. The Ride started when the Swift Current Ag & Ex planned and organized the 76th Frontier Day’s Event that would now partner-up with the City of Swift Current to commemorate 100 years!

This 76th Frontier Days / Homecoming was a true commemoration enjoyed by all as we celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the City of Swift Current. The parade was a highlight – cowboys on horseback, wagons, live music with guitars and songs that told stories of the West and Western living. The theme ‘Let’s Celebrate Past / Present / Future’ was a true tribute and Cowboy hats were raised to the success. The people, the animals, the farm machinery, the bands, the colors, the smiles: an incredible demonstration of community spirit. 100 years of history was represented as various entries depicted a range of decades. Western culture was celebrated with horses, cowboys and cowgirls, the Western Development Museum Stage Coach, covered wagons, commercial floats, various styles of music, the Roughrider Pep Band, the Calliope from the Western Development Museum, antique and modern farm equipment, assorted vehicles, and many dignitaries. A great big YaHoo! was extended to the tremendous volunteers, participants, and the huge numbers of cheering spectators along the parade route!

Because of the warm welcoming spirit, Swift Current was the destination for many throughout the West. The ‘we can make this work’ attitude continues today. Volunteers gave many hours of time: individuals; sport teams; cultural and social groups; community organizations; service clubs; schools; and businesses. Sponsorships provided monetary and an assortment of ‘in-kind’ support. These resources contributed greatly to the success of the Frontier Days / Homecoming celebration of the century. The Ag & Ex Board of Directors and office staff extended a tip of the cowboy hat to everyone! Thanks to the supporting sponsors (among these was SAASE- thank you!) and fantastic volunteers, Frontier Days and the traditional homecoming events will continue to be successful ‘ridin’ into the sunset’ for the next 100 Years.

# **Moose Jaw Exhibition - Saskatchewan Burrowing Owl Interpretive Centre Relocation**

The Saskatchewan Burrowing Owl Centre located on the Moose Jaw Exhibition grounds was one of the first projects supported by the SAASE Venture Project Program. Since then the Centre has expanded, both in construction and in programming. In 2014/15 the Centre is once again going through some big changes, as the Centre relocates and once again expands programming.

The Saskatchewan Burrowing Owl Interpretive Centre (SBOIC) opened its doors to the public in 1997 with the mandate to promote conservation of the endangered Burrowing Owl and its native prairie habitat through education, eco-tourism and stewardship. Over the years the Centre and its travelling education program, Owls-on-Tour, have increased in popularity and as a result, have outgrown their current facility. The relocation is important for the Centre's residents and staff as they are in need of additional indoor enclosures, a medical treatment room, upgraded interactive displays, and a theatre-style presentation area that can host larger groups. The Centre consists of five separate buildings and is in the process of consolidating these buildings under one roof with the renovation/refurbishment of an existing 5000 square foot building, called the "Diner", on the Moose Jaw Exhibition Grounds.

The MJ Ex Co hasn't always existed in its present location. When the Company moved to Thatcher Drive in Moose Jaw, the Diner building was moved on sight along with the rest of the facility. The Diner was originally part of an "H-hut" used for housing soldiers during training for WWII. As part of the MJ Ex Co, the building was rented for community events and more recently for storage. The MJ Ex Co is proud to be taking a more environmental approach by "upcycling" an unused building.

SBOIC is excited for the relocation/renovation as it will improve the health and welfare of the Owls currently in their care. This will allow the Centre to be open more throughout the year as there will be indoor viewing enclosures – the current arrangement only allows the Centre to be open during the summer months with their off-site visits year round. With the updated interactive displays, the Centre will be able to offer a state-of-the-art education program, taking the Centre's mandate to the next level. SBOIC should also see an increase in the amount of tourist visits and elevate their already high standing in the community as a tourist attraction. The Moose Jaw Exhibition Company is committed to helping this endangered species and does so without any government funding. The MJ Ex Co, SBOIC and their Board of Directors would like to thank SAASE for their generous help over the years as well as their Corporate and Citizen supporters!

## **Volunteer of the Year**

### **Kim Seip - Nominated by the Moose Jaw Exhibition**

"The Moose Jaw Exhibition Company is proud to nominate Kim Seip for the volunteer award. Kim frequently volunteers to run the gate at the Moose Jaw Exhibition Company's horse shows. Her support to all the show exhibitors, entering and exiting the arena, is very much appreciated. She spends all day, from the early morning hours to the conclusion of the event, making sure that the riders are organized and ready to go. Kim has the ability to make a nervous little girl smile as she enters the ring just by complimenting and reassuring her that everything will be okay." SAASE is honored to name Kim Seip of Moose Jaw SAASE's Volunteer of the Year.

# SaskEnergy Volunteer Champion Awards - 2015



SAASE's Honourary Life Memberships - Joyce Walter and Ernie Wilson  
Left to right - Vern Bexson, Greg Lawrence, Joyce Walter,  
Ernie Wilson, LeAnne Gamble



Representatives from the Swift Current Ag & Ex. accept the Achievement of the Year Award. From left to right in the picture - Kathy Jennings, Rob Myers, Tracey Stevenson, Greg Lawrence (MLA), Stan Aikens (President - Swift Current Ag & Ex.), Jenn Duncan, Wade Jensen, Lindsay Gerbrandt, LeAnne Gamble (SaskEnergy).



Judy Wilson accepts the Achievement of the Year Award for the Moose Jaw Exhibitions relocation of the Burrowing Owl Interpretive Centre